William T. Jones
P.O. Box 1314
Boston, MA 02117

May 18, 1990

Dear Mr. Pettenhofer,

Enclosed are the slides of the 1795 C-6A and 1802 C-1 half cents which I photographed at the EAC convention. The 1802 slide is not quite as nice as I would have liked, and I tossed in an extra shot I did of a Mass. silver piece earlier in the evening to show a better example of my work. Next year, I will have my copy stand with me, and the photography will be easier and better.

I really enjoyed your lecture on the 1854 pattern half cent. Your conclusion that the copper, tin and silver alloy from which it was made was an experimental composition for the small cent is probably valid. The mint was experimenting with several different alternatives to the large cent during this period, and the strange alloy which you found in your half cent was probably one of their more radical creations. The copper-nickel alloy which was finally selected for the cent was chosen because of political pressure from nickel mine owner, Joseph Wharton, and because the mint officials felt that the thick, white cents looked like they were worth one cent. Later, when the smaller copper Civil War tokens received wide acceptance, the mint officials were able to convince Congress to authorize a similar piece for the cent in 1864. The bronze cents were cheaper to produce and easier to strike.

Soon after I arrived home from Florida, JJ Teaparty had an AU-50 1794 half dime for me. The piece is a Valentine 3A which is currently rated a high R-5. I have a strong interest in the early half dimes, and I am currently working on a 10 year project to assemble a date and major variety set, minus the 1802. My collection now lacks the 1797 15 star, the 1803 and the 1805. The beauty of this series is that the major competition comes from type collectors, and the premium for the better dates is not that great in many cases. In addition, very few people take note of the Valentine varieties, except for such items as the 1796 over 5, and this affords the numismatist with the opportunity to cherry pick some rarities. The down side is that all of these pieces are scarce and fairly expensive. For example, the 1800 V-1, which is the more common "LIBERTY" variety, is perhaps the most common variety in the series with a low R-3 rating. That places it about equal in rarity to the 1802 C-2 half cent !

Have a beautiful summer and a healthy and prosperous year. I will be looking forward to seeing you in Boston next April.

Sincerely,

Bill Jones

cf home 1854

R. TETTENHORST
P. O. Box 14020
Saint Louis, Missouri 63178

May 31, 1990

William T. Jones
P. O. Box 1314
Boston, MA 02117

Dear Bill:

Thanks for the slides. I enjoyed looking at them. Thanks also for the comments about the 1854 pattern and early half cents.

I look forward to seeing you next year in Boston.

Sincerely,

R. Tettenhorst

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